

A NOTE ON A CASE OF *LOA LOA*\*

BY

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From May, 1906 to June, 1907, I was in Southern Nigeria; beyond a few slight attacks of fever I was in good health. From July to November, 1907, I was in Wales, and had evanescent thickening of one or other leg, and, generally, an oedema about the ankle, which puzzled me, and which lasted a day or two; various diagnoses were made, including rheumatism, cellulitis, erythema, nodosum, etc.

From November, 1907 to December, 1908, I was in Lagos Protectorate; no symptoms beyond an occasional oedema about the ankle of one or other foot; no fever. December—March, 1909, travelling on Continent. In March, 1909, I settled down in Wales and had no symptoms until the late summer, when I began to notice fugitive swellings in various parts of the body, generally in the neighbourhood of joints; painless, but associated with stiffness. The general diagnosis was rheumatism, although one consultant of note diagnosed Angioneurotic oedema. In November, 1909, I recognised *Filaria loa* crossing the bridge of the nose, since which time there has been no prolonged freedom from signs of the presence of the worm.

As a rule, I became suddenly aware of a stiffness in a certain part of the body; on examination I would find that part swollen, sometimes to a considerable extent. At first the swelling was wont to be localised, but later it would involve the greater part of the circumference of the limb. I once had an upper arm that Hackenschmidt would envy! When the parasite appeared on the face I was generally made aware of its presence by accidentally feeling a spot that was tender on pressure, say, in the lower jaw;

\* The following note is of considerable value as representing Dr. Rogers' description of the symptoms in his own case.—J. W. W. Stephens.

later on, in an hour or two, that part was swollen but the tender spot had passed upwards towards the eye, always leaving in its wake an oedematous track. I noticed that invariably when it appeared on the face it made its way towards one or other eye: it generally made one or two tours round the eye, either in the lid or under the ocular conjunctiva, and then crossed the bridge of the nose to the other eye; in the region of the eye it was always visible under the skin. After visiting the eye it would wander over the scalp, its curve being easily traceable by the tender area and, later, localised swelling. The next day possibly, I would feel nothing further, and so for several weeks; or, on the other hand, I might wake up with a swelling in a leg or arm; in this case it is impossible to say whether it was the same worm or no, as it was later shown that I had at least two parasites. The presence of the worm in the eye was always accompanied by a pricking, boring pain; when under the conjunctiva it caused severe conjunctivitis with redness, dilated vessels, feeling of grit, headache, etc.

On one occasion a cutting operation was attempted without success; on another, an injection, likewise without success, of 1/1000 perchloride. After these attempts it disappeared for several weeks. Towards the end of 1912 (about October, I think) a worm was removed from under the conjunctiva, on which you kindly reported, describing it as an immature female. After this there were no more ordinary, usual symptoms for some time. In December, 1912, I developed 'Mumps,' and was accordingly isolated; in the light of later knowledge I have no doubt this was caused by the second parasite. After that I had rest until a month or two ago, when, after the prolonged hot weather, the old signs reappeared, but in an exaggerated form. A swelling would appear in a limb, at first localised (exactly like a lipoma), but later on (a few hours) firm, brawny and, for the first time, *red*, looking like a cellulitis. The limb (arm or leg) would be quite elephantoid: on one memorable occasion the thigh was so swollen that I was unable for several hours to put on my trousers. *On that occasion the parasite, if it was the same one, had been seen in the eye the previous day.* The swelling would be totally gone in a day or two. When it appeared in the eye it would leave that organ swollen and closed, giving me a 'drunk and disorderly' appearance; that, with

the accompanying headache and woebegone look, were likely to give rise to unwarrantable suspicions detrimental to my character.

During the first two or three years I made numerous blood examinations, but found nothing of interest. At first the red cells were poor in shape and colour, and I several times saw the parasites of tropical tertian fever. In 1909-1911 my mononuclear count was about 20 per cent. and I had an eosinophilia of 3-5 per cent., which was not surprising seeing that in addition to this *F. loa* I suffered from Bilharzia (contracted during the South African War), and from which I was not altogether free until the end of 1911. I have made no blood examination since November, 1911.

A second worm, now in your possession, was removed in the middle of August, 1913. (This worm is a mature female. J. W. W. Stephens.)